

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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O 021710Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6483
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MAPUTO 1455

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, MZ, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MEETING WITH MACHEL

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH UK AMBASSADOR AND ME THIS MORNING, PRESIDENT MACHEL MADE AN IMPASSIONED PLEA FOR US AND UK TO HELP PREVENT FURTHER RHODESIAN RAIDS INTO MOZAMBIQUE. MACHEL STRESSED THAT HE CANNOT PERMIT THESE DEVASTATING RAIDS TO CONTINUE; HE MUST HAVE ARMS WITH WHICH TO COUNTER RHODESIAN MIRAGES AND SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS. MEETING AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THE POINT THAT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL MAY BE THE BEST WAY TO PUT AN END TO FIGHTING ALONG THE BORDER AND TO NOTE THAT THE US AND UK WERE PRESSING FORWARD VIGOROUSLY WITH IT. WITH RESPECT TO OUR PROPOSAL, MACHEL SAID , "WE ARE COOPERATING WITH YOU, LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION." HE CONTENDS THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTIONS PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE. HE WANTS TO SEE CHANGES IN THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT, HE SAID THAT DURING THE TRANSITION IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE BE ABLE TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES THAT POWER IS IN

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FACT PASSING FROM SMITH TO THE NATIONALISTS. MACHEL SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET WITH LORD CARVER PROVIDED CARVER HAS CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO PRESENT. HE ASKED THAT HIS DEEP CONCERN OVER THE RAIDS BE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN. I BELIEVE A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO MACHEL EXPRESSING COMPASSION OVER RECENT RAIDS AND US DETERMINATION TO PRESS FORWARD

WITH THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED BY MACHEL AND WOULD SERVE US WELL IN OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FRONT LINE BACKING FOR OUR PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT MACHEL SUMMONED UK AMBASSADOR JOHN LEWEN AND ME AT 1000 HOURS THIS MORNING. FOREIGN MINISTER CHISSANO AND PRESIDENTIAL AIDE FERNANDO HONWANA WERE PRESENT. MEETING LASTED ALMOST TWO HOURS.

3. THE REASON MACHEL CALLED US IN WAS TO TALK ABOUT RHODESIA. HE BEGAN BY ASKING AMBASSADOR LEWEN WHERE THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL STOOD. LEWEN BRIEFLY RECOUNTED DEVELOPMENTS OF PAST MONTH, INCLUDING MENTION OF DIFFICULTY EXPERIENCED IN ARRANGING MEETINGS WITH PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE SAID THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN HOPED NKOMO AND MUGABE WOULD ACCEPT HIS LATEST INVITATION TO COME TO LONDON FOR TALKS ON THE PROPOSAL. MACHEL WAS EAGER TO FIND OUT WHO (NKOMO OR MUGABE) WAS BEING MOST DIFFICULT. MACHEL SEEMED TO BE SURPRISED THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAD NOT YET SUBMITTED A COUNTER PROPOSAL TO THE UK. HE SAID IT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN BETTER HAD THE PATRIOTIC FRONT SAID RIGHT AWAY WHAT IT WOULD ACCEPT, WHAT IT REJECTED AND WHAT THEY CONSIDER NEGOTIABLE IN THE PROPOSAL. MACHEL LEFT BOTH LEWEN AND ME WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HE MAY TALK TO NKOMO AND MUGABE OVER THE WEEKEND AND URGE THEM TO MEET WITH THE BRITISH AND LET THE BRITISH KNOW THEIR VIEWS ON
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THE PROPOSAL.

4. WHEN HE TURNED TO ME I SAID THAT I HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO SAY THAT EVEN THOUGH SMITH SEEMED TO BE SEEKING AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, WE INTEND TO PRESS FORWARD VIGOROUSLY WITH OUR PROPOSAL SINCE IT OFFERS THE BEST AND SUREST WAY OF REACHING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN ZIMBABWE.

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MAPUTO 1455

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

5. MACHEL WONDERED WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "DIFFICULTIES" THAT HAD ARISEN OVER THE PROPOSAL. "IS IT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, SMITH, OR HAS THE US OR UK LACKED THE WILL TO MOVE FORWARD?" WHEN AMBASSADOR LEWEN NOTED THAT DIFFERENCES OF OPINION HAVE SURFACED AMONG THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS ABOUT ELECTIONS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, MACHEL SAID HE DID NOT THINK THIS WAS AN OBSTACLE. IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING, HE SAID, THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAD ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTIONS AND REFERRED TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT COMMUNIQUE OF SEPTEMBER 12, WHICH HE CONSULTED, AS PROOF OF THIS. AMBASSADOR LEWEN AND I NOTED THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT STATEMENT ON ELECTIONS DID NOT COMMIT THEM TO ELECTIONS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, TO WHICH MACHEL REPLIED THAT SINCE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS REFERRING TO THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN, THIS WAS IMPLIED.

6. MOVING FROM ELECTIONS, MACHEL SAID THE ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL IN WHICH HE WAS MOST INTERESTED AT THE MOMENT CONCERNED ARRANGEMENTS DURING TRANSITION. HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS TO BE DONE WITH THOSE WHO HAD DONE THE SECRET

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FIGHTING AND WHAT ROLE THERE WOULD BE FOR NKOMO AND MUGABE DURING THIS PERIOD. HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICALLY THAT DURING THE TRANSITION THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE SEE WITH THEIR OWN EYES THAT DECOLONIZATION IS TAKING PLACE, I.E., THAT POWER IS PASSING FROM THE SMITH REGIME TO THE NATIONALISTS. IF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER HAS ALL THE POWER, AND RETAINS THE SMITH POWER STRUCTURE, THE ZIMBABWEANS WILL NOT SEE EVIDENCE OF DECOLONIZATION. THIS HAS TO APPEAR. MOREOVER, WHEN WE OPEN OUR BORDERS WITH RHODESIA, OUR PEOPLE WILL ASK FOR WHOM ARE WE OPENING OUR BORDERS. IT MUST BE CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT IN RHODESIA IS NOT THE SAME SMITH REGIME. MACHEL ASKED THAT WE CONVEY THESE VIEWS TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN.

7. MACHEL SAID THE SECOND THING HE WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH US WAS THE RECENT RHODESIAN RAID (OR RAIDS) INTO MOZAMBIQUE. VISIBLY DISTRAUGHT, HE WONDERED HOW THE US AND UK INTERPRETED THIS LATEST AGGRESSION. "WHY IS SMITH DOING THIS; NO STATE CAN PERMIT THIS. I MUST," HE SAID, "HAVE ARMS WITH WHICH TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY AGAINST RHODESIA'S MIRAGES AND SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS." MACHEL SAID THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL (SC RESOLUTION 411 OF JUNE 1977) HAD CALLED UPON UN MEMBERS TO HELP MOZAMBIQUE DEFEND ITSELF. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE US AND UK COULD PROVIDE ARMS. LEWEN SAID NO; I OBSERVED THAT THE US HAD ALREADY OFFERED \$8.7 MILLION OF FOOD AID IN RESPONSE TO THE RESOLUTION. MACHEL OBVIOUSLY THOUGHT WE SHOULD DO MORE, REMARKING, "WHAT GOOD IS FOOD TO DEAD WOMEN AND CHILDREN?"

8. MACHEL OBSERVED THAT SMITH IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE POWER OF THE US. (THIS IS LESS TRUE, HE SAID, OF THE

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UK.) BUT HE SAID WE COULD BE TOUGHER WITH SMITH THAN WE ARE. THIS IS WHY, HE SAID, HE HAD CALLED LEWEN AND ME IN, EVEN BEFORE HE HAD SPOKEN TO HIS SOCIALIST ALLIES OR THE AFRICANS. HE HOPED PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN MIGHT HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT HE MIGHT DO IN THE FACE OF THESE CONTINUED ATTACKS. HE SAID HE WAS SEEKING OUR VIEWS BECAUSE "WE ARE ALLIES IN THIS CASE OF ZIMBABWE."

9. COMMENT: MACHEL WAS GRIM. THESE LAST RAIDS CLEARLY TROUBLE HIM. IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING IF HE IS UNDER SOME PRESSURE FROM WITHIN HIS OWN GOVERNMENT AND PERHAPS THE ARMY TO DO SOMETHING TO COUNTER THESE ATTACKS. MACHEL DID NOT IMPLY IN WHAT HE SAID TO US TODAY THAT HE IS ABOUT READY TO INVITE THE CUBANS OR SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP DEFEND HIS BORDER, ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE A CONSEQUENCE IF THERE SEEMS TO BE NO ALTERNATIVE. AT A MINIMUM, I WOULD GUESS HE WILL APPROACH THE SOVIETS AND OTHER ARMS SUPPLIERS FOR MORE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT, WHICH WOULD ENTAIL MORE TECHNICIANS AND ADVISERS.

10. THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION MACHEL KEPT ASKING THAT WE BE SURE TO REPORT WHAT HE WAS SAYING TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN. MACHEL SEEMS TO BE AWARE THAT NEITHER THE UK NOR THE US IS LIKELY TO PROVIDE HIM WITH ARMS, BUT HE DOES THINK WE CAN DO MORE THAN WE HAVE BEEN DOING TO PUT PRESSURE ON SMITH. THIS HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE US DO. HE PROBABLY FEELS THAT A PERSONAL APPEAL TO CARTER AND CALLAGHAN MAY ELICIT SUCH A RESPONSE,

AT LEAST FROM THE US.

11. RECOMMENDATION. MACHEL SEEMS TO EXPECT SOME FORM OF
RESPONSE FROM WASHINGTON. A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER
EXPRESSING COMPASSION OVER THE LOSS OF LIFE AND DAMAGE
SUFFERED DURING THESE RAIDS AND NOTING OUR DETERMINATION
TO PRESS FOR A JUST SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA WOULD BE
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WELCOME BY MACHEL AND I BELIEVE WOULD BE USEFUL TO US
IN ELICITING HIS SUPPORT FOR WHATEVER NEXT STEPS WE
HAVE IN MIND ON RHODESIA.
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Message Attributes

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